

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 18, of the specification as follows:

When the depth profiles of media samples utilized for developing the graphs of FIGS. 3 (A) and 3 (B) were analyzed by Time-of-Flight/Secondary Ion Mass Spectroscopy (~~TEOS/SIMS~~) (TOF/SIMS), the presence of chromium and cobalt oxides (CrO_x and CoO_x) was detected between the carbon (C)-based protective overcoat layers and the recording layers when the % O_2 content of the O_2 /inert carrier gas mixture was greater than about 0.1 %. The amount of such chromium and cobalt oxides formed when the % O_2 content was less than about 0.1 % was below the detection limit of the ~~TEOS/SIMS~~ TOF/SIMS technique. Therefore, depending upon the design of the media and the fabrication tool (e.g., post-treatment chamber), and selection of the analysis technique, oxide species formed as a result of the inventive *in situ* post-deposition oxygen treatment may not be detectable.